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relate to the dependent, defective, and delinquent classes, and agriculture. However, it is not likely materially to decrease the number of cross-references to other special or general census reports which the investigator will have to make for the sake of amending his data. It may not be out of place to remark that a similar special census report on immigrants would be of great value at the present time.

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Population: A Study in Malthusianism. By WARREN S. THOMPSON. Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol. LXIII, No. 3. (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1915. Pp. 216. \$1.75.)

The century-old controversy over the theories of the Rev. Thomas Malthus is revived once more by Dr. Thompson in a dress of refreshing originality. The old method of deductive reasoning is abandoned, the theory is cleared of non-essentials, and the main thesis of the English economist is amply supported by strong statistical evidence.

The Malthusian position is thus stated by Dr. Thompson: "Although at any normal time there is food enough to keep alive all members of the population, yet it is only actual pressure upon subsistence, or fear of pressure, which keeps population from multiplying more rapidly than it actually does." This statement does not agree with the usual interpretation of the doctrine, which interpretation is based on the first edition of the *Essay*. In the sixth edition, however, Malthus made his statement decidedly less pessimistic and it is only fair to judge a writer by his most mature thought. Perhaps if Malthus were writing in more modern economic terminology he would say that a downward pressure upon the standard of living operates as a check upon the increase of population.

In presenting his statistical evidence, the author first shows by index numbers of wages and prices that real wages have fallen in the past twenty five years, not only in the United States but in all countries in which the figures are available. Statistics are then presented in regard to the production of food-stuff of all kinds, proving that the rate of increase has kept pace with the increase of population chiefly by the bringing

of new lands under cultivation rather than by increasing the production per acre. He also shows that the possibilities of increasing the area of cultivation are not so great as generally supposed. The fact that in the United States the area of land in farms increased only 4.8 per cent between 1900 and 1910 is evidence that there is comparatively little unused land which is not beyond the present margin of profitable cultivation.

In measuring the movement of population the author states that the unprecedented increase of the past fifty years was made possible by the rapid development of means of transportation, labor-saving farm machinery, and the extension of the area of cultivation. The rapid development of these features can not be repeated in the future. Evidence is then presented to show that the law of diminishing returns is operating powerfully in agriculture and that the assumed increasing returns of industry are largely fictitious when all the social costs are taken into account.

Dr. Thompson's conclusions are, then: (1) That Malthus was essentially correct in his statement of the law of population. (2) Malthus was also correct when he said that much misery and suffering is caused by the overcrowding of the population. The greater death-rate of the lower classes shows that they suffer because they are unable to provide themselves with the essentials of life. (3) Population can not continue to increase at its present rate without a simplification of the standard of living.

G. B. L. ARNER.

The Medico-Actuarial Mortality Investigation. Five volumes. I. *Height and Weight. Rate of Mortality to be Used in Standard or Expected Deaths.* II. *Influence of Build on Mortality. Causes of Death. Mortality among Women. Mortality among North American Indians, Negroes, Chinese and Japanese in North America.* III. *Effects of Occupation on Mortality.* IV. *Mortality among Insured Lives, Showing Medical Impairment. Defects in Physical Condition, in Personal History or Family History.* V. *Defects in Physical Condition in Personal or Family History. Mortality in Southern States. Mortality under Joint Lives.* (New York: Association of Life Insurance Medical Directors and Actuarial Society of America. 1915. Pp. 131; 159; 219; 211; 185. Vol. I, \$2.50; vols. II-V, \$10 each.)